[0] (in other dialects translated as okumu).

The people are called Nkundó or Mongo, never Benkundó or [0] Bamongo. The prefix ba is often heard, as it may be used in front [15] of all proper names, similarly to the French usage in les Molière, les Rabeau, etc. [or the English usage: the Browns, the Frenchs, the Nkundós]. The singular prefix ba is also used, but only rarely. [4] I have heard it only in the expression: ala ó bankundó mongo, "He is a real Nkundo." This statement was made only in speaking of a foreigner who had successfully assimilated the Nkundó language and culture. It is possible, however, that it has a broader meaning.

Is it possible to discover an etymology for these names? [0] Mongo is a common noun signifying something excellent, especially a person. People say mótoŋ'ó'ósa, "a fine child," mótoŋ'ó'ómoto, a superb woman." (The name should be compared also with the term ómongo, which denotes the state of being of a person who is well thought of, prosperous, rich, etc.) The form of the word does not change in the plural. The name Nkundó is more difficult to explain, if an explanation is at all possible. (1) If the name is to be related

> 1. The word is Nkundó not Nkundu or Kundu. The assertion that the initial n is not part of the word, but is simply a nasal sound which must precede a consonant in the native sound system, shows a real lack of linguistic knowledge.

to some other word, the only possibility is the verb kundola, "to unearth what has been buried." But to unearth what? The corpses of one's enemies, in order to prove one's daring by eating them? Or copper rings, which would mean their wealth? The possibility is there, but we have no direct evidence. According to Father Hinnemann and Lemaeghe (on p. 195 of the article mentioned), some maintain that Nkundó means chief, "master." But what is the basis for this explanation? (2)

> 2. In contrast to the Batwa, the Nkundó and other groups are Bantu (sing. Muntu), meaning non-Batwa.